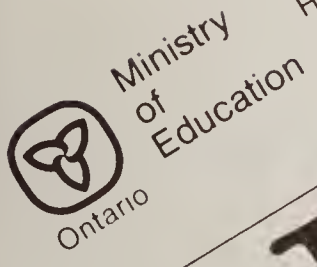
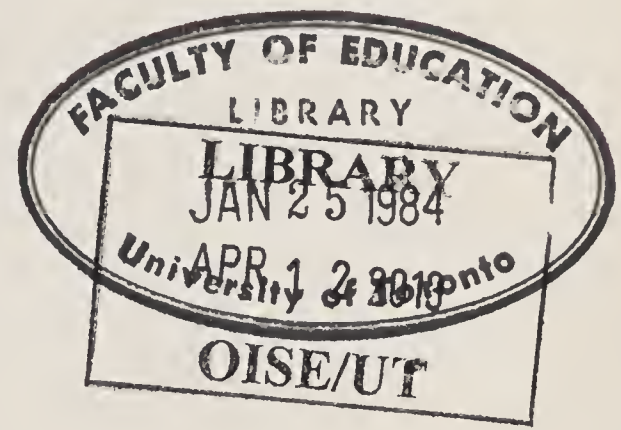


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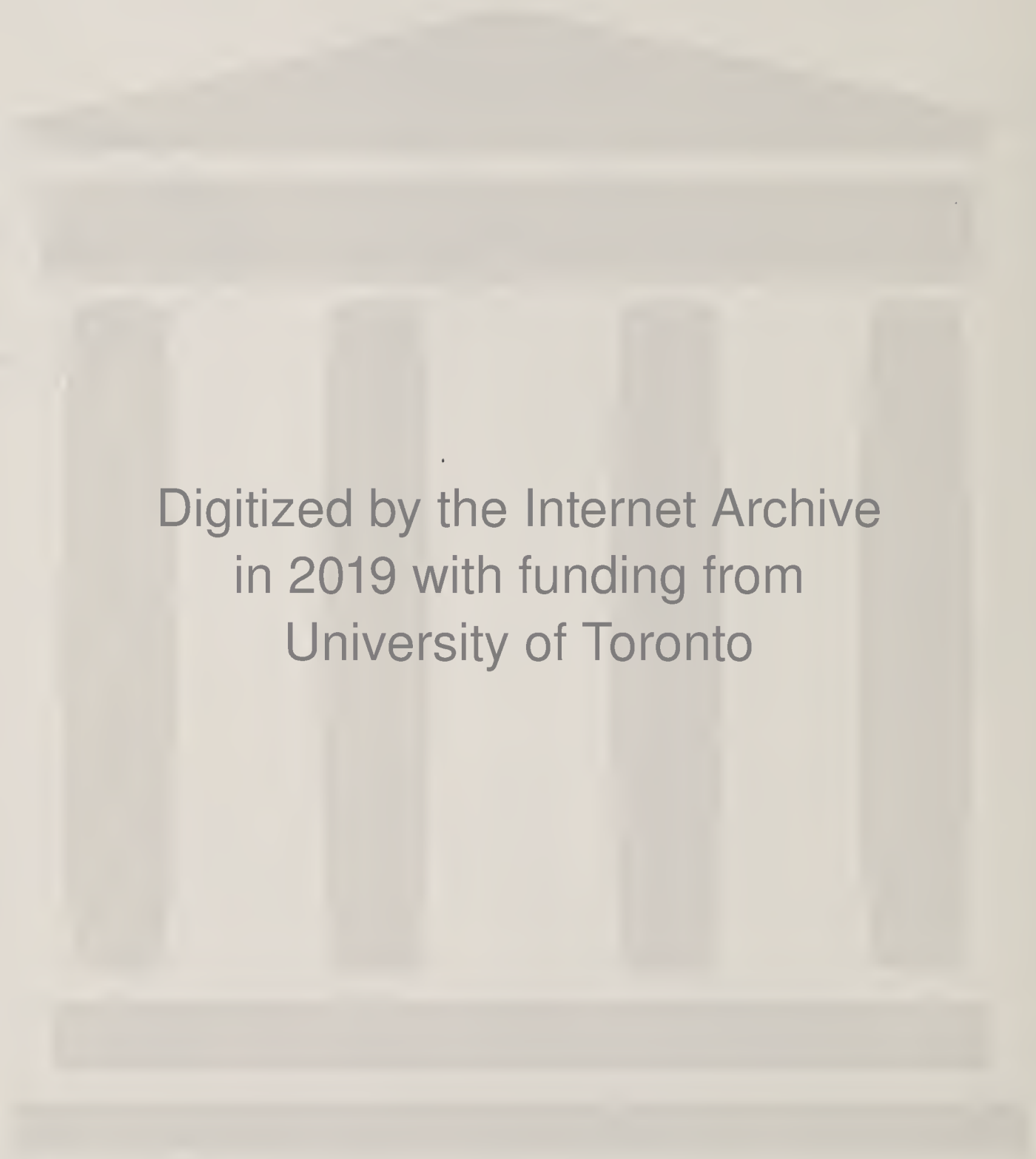
Hon. Bette Stephenson, M.D., Minister
Harry K. Fisher, Deputy Minister

Provincial Review Report



1 9 8 3
Number 12

HISTORY: INTERMEDIATE DIVISION



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
BACKGROUND	2
o Introduction	2
o Implementation	2
o Process	3
OBJECTIVES	4
OVERVIEW	5
FINDINGS	8
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL BOARDS	16

PREFACE

This report has been structured to permit the reader to pursue the topic in as much depth as he or she desires. For a quick summary, the reader is directed to the following sections: Background, Objectives, Overview, and Recommendations. The section entitled Findings provides greater detail: the findings are, in the main, statistically representative of the populations surveyed. Appendices containing selected information for the statistically-minded reader are available. (One copy of the Appendices has been forwarded to each Director of Education; additional copies are available at each Regional Office of the Ministry of Education.)

BACKGROUND

Introduction

The guideline History: Intermediate Division, 1977 was issued for implementation to begin September 1978. Subsequent to the publication of the guideline, several resource documents in the Curriculum Ideas for Teachers series, prepared in support of the guideline, were distributed to the schools to assist teachers. The guideline specifies that all students in Grades 7 and 8 should have a thorough understanding of significant aspects of Canadian history and be aware of Canada's multicultural heritage. It also requires that the course, "Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns" be compulsory. Therefore, it was crucial to determine whether the guideline provides enough flexibility and direction to assist teachers in meeting the needs of all students in the Intermediate Division.

Process

The review focused on three groups of clients: those at the school board central office - including trustees, the supervisory officer responsible for curriculum, and the board consultant or co-ordinator (if available); those at the school - including the principal, department head, teachers, and students; and those at the post-secondary level - including history staffs of faculties of education and staffs of OISE field centres who had been involved in the implementation of the guideline.

Questionnaires for trustees, supervisory officers, and consultants were used only in school boards where at least one school with Grades 7 and 8 and one school with Grade 9 and/or Grade 10 were visited. In these instances, board resources, including curriculum resource documents, were examined.

School visits included interviews with the principal, department head (where appropriate), two teachers, and four students. Each person interviewed also completed a questionnaire. In total, 359 randomly selected schools were visited. Within each of these schools, teaching strategies were observed for about 45 minutes in a randomly selected class. An examination of classroom curriculum and evaluation documents was also carried out. Questionnaires were completed by the history staffs of faculties of education and staffs of OISE field centres.

Implementation

"Implementation" was conceived to be the carrying out of concerted activities which ensure that the practices prescribed or suggested in ministry documents occur.

The review team developed numerous survey items to evaluate the extent of implementation of various elements, as well as a comprehensive methodological strategy to obtain a detailed overview of the implementation process.

Measurement of the extent of an element's implementation was achieved through the use of a scale ranging from 0 to 100. To ensure that all reviewers used the scale in a meaningful and consistent manner, each reviewer was provided with a scale guide. It indicated that any number from 0 to 100 could be used, subdivided the scale into seven major gradations, and provided the reviewer with selection criteria for each gradation.

The score range and gradations were:

<u>Score Range</u>	<u>Gradation of Implementation</u>
0	None
1-20	Minimal
21-40	Limited
41-60	Moderate
61-80	Significant
81-99	Extensive
100	Optimum

These descriptive gradations are used throughout this review. The criteria on which each gradation is based can be found in Appendix D¹, where the scale guide is reproduced.

Statistical Methodology

A detailed presentation of the methodological process is provided in Appendix A. The statistically-oriented reader may wish to consult Appendix B for the characteristics of each of the groups surveyed. Appendix C presents selected tabulations related to the report. The review's entire data bank and related software programs are stored on tape in the Management Information Systems Branch. Requests for more detailed tabulations are available on request.

¹Appendices referred to in this review are available at the regional offices of the Ministry of Education.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the intermediate history review were to:

1. determine the degree of implementation of the guideline
History: Intermediate Division, 1977
2. identify the procedures used in the implementation of the guideline;
3. evaluate the appropriateness of the intermediate history program for students;
4. evaluate the appropriateness of the guideline and the
Curriculum Ideas for Teachers support documents for teachers;
5. survey the attitudes of various members of the educational community (e.g., students, teachers, principals, and board personnel) toward the guideline and the associated support documents;
6. obtain suggestions for modifications to the guideline and the support documents;
7. identify the Circular 14 learning materials used in the intermediate history program.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The present guideline enjoys widespread support. Any change or modification of the guideline should not change its philosophical direction but rather should clarify and augment that direction. The present guideline provides adequate flexibility but inadequate direction for teachers to best meet student needs in relation to the guideline objectives.

On average, the data indicate that schools have implemented the guideline to a moderate extent. The aims of the program, as specified on page 6 of the guideline, were found to be satisfactorily addressed in the intermediate years.

While the aims of the guideline were adequately implemented, the following areas were found to require further attention:

- o the development of higher-level reasoning skills in students
- o the development of students' understanding of the concept of Social Reform
- o the development of an appreciation in students of the way the arts contribute to an understanding of contemporary issues in Canadian society in "Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns".

For the most part, objectives specific to individual courses were implemented to a satisfactory degree.

Most program planning at the school/classroom level is based on the selection of content. Once content has been chosen, the most appropriate strategy for dealing with that content is selected. A method for evaluating student progress is selected that addresses whether or not the content taught has been learned by the student. These practises have resulted in teacher-centred learning and evaluation of content retention. There was little evidence of program planning, as defined on page 14 of the guideline, at the classroom level.

If the policies of the guideline are to remain basic to the program, the following issues must be addressed:

1. Content

Teachers and other members of the educational community tend to agree that the content of the guideline is appropriate. However, teachers' comments focused on a perceived lack of time available to "cover" all the content. This led to requests for a higher degree of specificity regarding what is "required" in a given course.

It appears that the focus on content stems from the desire to be able to point to a body of facts and to assert that this material has been "covered" or taught. It is frequently assumed that, since the material has been "covered", the students should know the content. This assumption leads to the view that content is an end in itself, a view contrary to that explicitly documented in the guideline where content is seen as the means by which the objectives of the course and the needs of students can be met. To meet this guideline requirement, teachers who develop courses from the guideline should receive assistance on how to plan a program and select content that meets student needs and the objectives of the guideline.

Many teachers have made an implicit assumption that student knowledge of Canadian history must be encyclopedic. This level of knowledge is not demanded by the guideline. In order to reduce the incidence of this assumption, an extensive program of professional development is needed along with a support document on the process of program implementation to meet policy requirements and student needs.

2. Student Needs

Anecdotal responses by students revealed that the strategies most appreciated by them focus on student activities. However, the methodology most frequently used in teaching intermediate history is teacher-centred and content-oriented. Evaluation techniques, as a result, also fall into this pattern. It would appear that, in order to tap obvious student interest, teachers must develop ways of creating positive attitudes for themselves toward student-centred learning.

3. Teacher Use of the Guideline and Support Documents

The guideline and support documents are used more frequently where no board documents exist. An average of 70 to 75 per cent of the schools surveyed made use of one or more of the Curriculum Ideas for Teachers documents in the series.

4. The Role of the Principal in Program Evaluation and Implementation

Program evaluation and implementation, an area neglected by principals, is one for which they requested assistance during the course of the review. Their reluctance to become involved in this area because of a perceived lack of subject expertise will need to be overcome. The principals reported that if they had more time and/or familiarity with the methods available, then they would become more involved. They also indicated that the Ministry of Education should outline policy expectations and should provide in-service training in program implementation and evaluation.

5. Implementation of the Guideline

The reviewers saw evidence of discrepancies between ministry expectations and the understanding of them at the board level. In board-produced materials, emphasis has been placed on the aims and objectives of the guideline: however, less attention has been paid to other components of the guideline, such as evaluation techniques, teaching/learning strategies, and program planning. This misunderstanding is encountered at the classroom level also.

There appears to be a lack of teacher awareness that board-produced materials are to be based upon the provincial guideline.

Corroborating other findings, the data indicate that the process of implementation is disjointed and incoherent.

DETAILED FINDINGS

This section outlines the findings for each objective of the review.

Objective 1: To determine the degree of implementation of the guideline,
History: Intermediate Division, 1977

Program Aims

For seven of the eleven aims, approximately 50 per cent² of the schools implemented the aims to at least a significant extent. However, implementation of the other four aims - to develop the ability to imaginatively recreate the past; to develop an awareness of the contributions of both men and women of all ages and groups to the development of Canada; to develop research skills; and to develop higher reasoning skills - occurred to a lesser extent. For each of these four aims, approximately 25 per cent of the schools surveyed had implemented them to a limited degree or less.

Mandatory Core Content

The extent of implementation for most topic areas ranged from significant to optimum. "Social reform", a topic required in the program "The Story of Canada and Canadians", was rated in the limited to moderate range.

Variety of Teaching/Learning Strategies

In all, the reviewers visited 359 classrooms. They recorded teaching strategies at five-minute intervals and found that, in the average classroom, 80 per cent of class time was devoted to eight of twenty-six different teaching/learning strategies. On the average, approximately 15 per cent of classroom time was directed to student-centred activities. The most commonly observed teaching strategy was teacher question-student answer; this accounted for approximately 40 per cent of the average classroom time. This lack of variety is at variance with the guideline which directs teachers to use a variety of techniques that take into account the students' interests, abilities, and needs.

²Unless otherwise stated, all percentages cited are based on adjusted frequency distributions; missing cases (no response, unable to observe, etc.) have been excluded from the percentage base.

Variety of Techniques for Evaluating Student Progress

Teachers reported using a variety of evaluation techniques. Most teachers surveyed (95 per cent) indicated that they were responsible for the selection of tests. Reviewers observed that evaluation techniques were almost exclusively content-oriented and objective in nature. There was little evidence of the use of peer-evaluation or self-evaluation procedures. Those procedures were found in only 20 per cent of the classrooms observed.

Of the teachers surveyed, 62 per cent received the Ontario Assessment Instrument Pool³ materials. Approximately 30 per cent of all teachers surveyed reported using OAIP items. Reviewers observed evidence of the use of OAIP items in 25 per cent of the classes visited. Use of OAIP items was reported by 66 per cent of supervisory officers and 43 per cent of co-ordinators. It appears that there is greater support for the use of OAIP items at the central board office than at the school level.

The Characteristics of a Planned Program

The section in the guideline entitled "Planning a Course of Study" was implemented to a moderate extent or less in 56 per cent of the schools visited. Planning at the classroom level tended to be limited to listing topics, identifying resources, stating approximate timing, and noting the types of expected evaluations.

Specific Course Objectives

- o "The Story of Canada and Canadians"

Generally, the objectives of this program have been met to a significant extent. There was no substantial evidence, however, that attention was being paid to the appreciation of social and economic forces as contributing to change throughout Canadian history; this area of appreciation was implemented to a less than significant extent in 51 per cent of the schools offering Grades 7 and 8.

³La banque d'instrument de mesure de l'Ontario (B.I.M.O.) was not available at the time of the review.

o "Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns"

In at least 75 per cent of the schools visited, reviewers judged that there was a clear effort to meet objectives dealing with citizenship, the political processes, and historical analysis of contemporary issues. Activities, however, that were designed to develop an appreciation of the contribution of the arts to an understanding of contemporary issues in Canadian society, were evident to a significant extent in only 27 per cent of the schools offering this course.

o "Canada's Multicultural Heritage"

The specific objectives for this optional credit course were observed to have been met to a significant extent. This course, which was taught in 54 of the 92 secondary schools in the sample, was most frequently offered at the advanced level. At this level, 23 of the 92 schools eligible to offer "Canada's Multicultural Heritage" had more than one class enrolled. Regardless of the level at which this course was offered, a relatively small proportion of the students opted for it. Reviewers assessed the degree of implementation as significant or higher in 88 per cent of the schools visited.

Issues

Based on the foregoing observations, the following items arose as issues:

- i) inadequate emphasis, during the four-year intermediate program, on the general objectives related to higher reasoning skills;

ii) failure to implement the following aspects of specific courses within the guideline:

- o Grades 7 and 8: an appreciation of social and economic forces as contributing to change throughout Canadian history;
- o Grades 9 or 10: an appreciation of how the arts contribute to an understanding of contemporary issues in Canadian society; and
an effective way of addressing the concept of "Canada's Multicultural Heritage";

iii) inclusion of core content which ensures the presence of the concept of social reform to a greater extent than was observed during this review;

iv) teaching and evaluation strategies stressing student-centred approaches and program evaluation at the school and classroom levels; and

v) improvement of the program-planning process in order to enable teachers to meet the needs of students. This will require reconsideration by teachers of the current practice of basing plans on content to be "covered" rather than on the needs and developmental stages of students.

Objective 2: To identify procedures used in the implementation of the guidelines

Overall, no clearly identifiable pattern of board implementation procedures has emerged from the data collected, although evidence of a wide variety of approaches does exist. The data indicate that there is no correlation between the existence of a concrete overall plan and the extent of implementation of policy at the classroom level. An explanation for this lack of correlation might be that the existence of a plan does not guarantee awareness of the plan and, without that awareness, implementation is not ensured. The one striking characteristic which emerged is the assumption that the principal has a high responsibility for implementation.

Approximately 80 per cent of the supervisory officers and/or designates indicated that the principal was delegated direct responsibility for implementation. In practice, it appears that roles in implementation are not clearly defined and much of the responsibility for implementation becomes the teacher's by default.

Of the 58 supervisory officers interviewed, 81 per cent reported that the board's approach to implementation included an overall plan on a system-wide basis. The components of these plans varied to a great degree. The two most frequently found components were: the delegation of responsibility for implementation to the principal, and the inclusion of discussions at principals' meetings (84 per cent). In 39 per cent of the plans, each school had the responsibility for designing its own approach for implementation. It can be surmised that, in the remaining cases, the school approach is mandated by the supervisory officer responsible for curriculum.

In comparing the responses from department heads, co-ordinators, and supervisory officers, it was found that 80 per cent of supervisory officers and co-ordinators of history (or equivalents) reported that direct responsibility for implementation was delegated to the principal; 65 per cent of the department heads gave the same response. About 70 per cent of the department heads indicated that each school was responsible for designing its own approach for implementing the guideline; 44 per cent of the supervisory officers and 44 per cent of the co-ordinators reported this to be the case. As a result of discussion with principals, it was recorded by reviewers that principals provided some leadership in implementing the intermediate history guideline.

Heads of departments were asked the same set of questions as supervisory officers regarding implementation. In the 33 boards where department heads responded to these questions, their responses and those of supervisory officers were compared. Complete agreement between these responses was not found in any of the boards surveyed. The most outstanding discrepancy in responses was the lack of agreement (in 23 out of 33 boards) as to whether the principal had been delegated responsibility for implementation.

Objective 3: To evaluate the appropriateness of the intermediate history program for students

Teachers tended to be positive when questioned about the appropriateness of the program. For example, 76 per cent of the teachers surveyed agreed to at least a great extent with the aims of the program. Approximately 70 per cent of the principals surveyed agreed that the program demanded by the guideline is highly appropriate for the students. Approximately 65 per cent of the students stated that they enjoyed history classes; the same proportion enjoyed the subject "Canadian history". About 60 per cent indicated that they would freely choose the subject the following year. During classroom observations, reviewers noted that students were interested and motivated. Consequently, if appropriateness is defined in terms of student and educator acceptance, the intermediate history program would seem to be appropriate for a majority of students.

Objective 4: To evaluate the appropriateness of the guideline and the support documents for teachers

Only 19 per cent of teachers responding to the questionnaire agreed that the philosophy of the guideline needs changing. Responses indicated that teachers believed that there is a general acceptance of the history program as outlined in the guideline, both from inside and outside the educational community. Teachers supported widely the content of the guideline. Approximately 75 per cent of the teachers surveyed believed that the guideline is flexible enough to accommodate all levels of difficulty. A majority of teachers did not believe that the core content areas of the guideline require change.

All things considered, 92 per cent of the teachers believed that the guideline is satisfactory or better.

Perceptions regarding the suitability of the support documents varied widely. On average, teachers gave a rating of moderate to the suitability of the Curriculum Ideas for Teachers series. The percentage of teachers rating a specific document in the series as highly suitable ranged from 20 per cent to 51 per cent, depending on the document.

Reviewers noted that support documents received more attention in schools where school-board curriculum support services were not readily available. However, an average of 25 to 30 per cent of the schools made no use of support documents whatsoever.

Objective 5: To survey the attitudes of various members of the educational community towards the guideline and the associated support documents

Those people sampled for this objective were positive about the general aims and content, and the view of the adolescent presented in the guideline. Only 8 per cent of the teachers expressed dissatisfaction. Approximately 55 per cent of the department heads found the amount of Canadian history content in the guideline to be appropriate. About 82 per cent of the department heads found the guideline useful for developing the course "Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns", and 74 per cent, for "Canada's Multicultural Heritage", at the advanced level. In general, the guideline is considered to be more useful for developing general and advanced courses than basic and modified courses. At least 70 per cent of the elementary-school principals and secondary-school principals indicated that the guideline was useful to some extent for the purposes of principal self-updating, interpreting the program to parents, and program evaluation. Elementary principals found the guideline somewhat more useful for the aforementioned purposes. This difference in perceived usefulness may reflect the fact that secondary-school principals have less direct involvement in program matters and are dependent upon the department heads in these areas.

Most superintendents of curriculum indicated that they felt the amount of Canadian history in the guideline to be appropriate and that they were satisfied with the guideline. Trustees indicated strong support for the general objectives and the content of the guideline.

In their conversations with reviewers, some teachers indicated that the most serious shortcoming of the guideline lies in its perceived lack of adaptability to basic and modified programs. Concern about the amount of content "to be covered" was expressed by a few teachers and department heads.

There was a wide range of opinion concerning the Curriculum Ideas for Teachers documents. A significant number of department heads reported having received no feedback from their teachers about these documents; this lack of response could be interpreted as a lack of interest in such resources. The frequency of the department heads reporting "no feedback" ranged from 33 per cent to 71 per cent, depending on the title of the document. Approximately 57 per cent of the elementary-school principals and 42 per cent of the secondary-school principals found the documents good or very good for updating purposes. Faculty of Education personnel found the documents useful in their pre-service programs.

These documents were perceived to vary in quality and usefulness. The degree of use was not as great in large boards with program support staff as it was in smaller boards where no board documents or program support staff existed.

Objective 6: To obtain suggestions for modifications to the guideline and the support documents

The following items were collected from those respondents who chose to offer suggestions for change.

Guideline

Suggestions received for improvement of the guideline are set out below.

i) Core Content

- o Broaden the perspective of the intermediate program by introducing an international dimension in order to reduce the emphasis on Canada in the guideline.
- o Incorporate into the two-year program "The Story of Canada and Canadians" and into the compulsory credit course "Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns" aspects of "Canada's Multicultural Heritage".
- o Reduce the emphasis on political history and increase the emphasis on social and economic history.

ii) Format

- o Revise the guideline to provide more specificity about content and time spent teaching each topic.
- o Give specific direction in order to meet the needs of students in general-level and basic-level programs.
- o Stress teaching-strategy alternatives in any new guideline.

Support Documents

The following additional support materials were requested:

- o information to assist in clarifying the concept of "social reform" and suggestions as to how it should be taught;
- o a principals' support document highlighting key points in the guideline;
- o resource materials to assist principals in evaluating programs at the school level; and
- o materials related to Histoire de Franco Ontarien.

Other Comments

The following general suggestions were received.

- o Provide in-service training at the board and school levels so that teachers may more effectively use the thematic approaches suggested in the present guideline, and link evaluation strategies to objectives, teaching methods, and available resources; and
- o Highlight any changes in emphasis and desired practices in a memorandum initiating the implementation of a new guideline.

Objective 7: To identify the Circular 14 learning materials used in the intermediate history program

The availability and use of materials, as indicated by the teachers surveyed, showed that the variety of materials listed in Circular 14 are being used in a number of ways. Non-Circular 14 titles were being used in only 6 per cent of the classrooms visited. The most frequent concern expressed was about the lack of materials useful for basic-level programs. During discussions, teachers stated that the areas of interest and reading levels of the materials rarely match the interests and reading levels of the students who are enrolled in basic-level programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCHOOL BOARDS

It is recommended that school boards:

1. clearly delineate the role of each participant in the implementation process, communicate these roles to their personnel, and support them by in-service training; and
2. analyse their practices in relation to the following:
 - o development of higher-level reasoning skills in students,
 - o increasing student awareness of social and economic forces,
 - o appreciation by students of the contributions of the arts to an understanding of contemporary issues in Canadian society,
 - o students' understanding of Canada's multicultural heritage and the concept of social reform,
 - o positive teacher attitudes toward student-centred approaches to learning,
 - o a system of program evaluation at the school level,
 - o a strategy for program planning based on the needs of students, their level of development, and the objectives of the program, using content as the vehicle.

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